

MEDEOLA VIRGINIANA L.

AN ADDITION TO THE LOUISIANA FLORA

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Medeola virginiana L. (Liliaceae), Indian cucumber-root, is listed in a number of regional flora (e.g., Gleason and Cronquist, 1963; Rickett, 1967; and Small, 1933) as occurring "to Louisiana". However, no record of Medeola having been previously collected in Louisiana is known, nor does it occur on a recent state checklist (Thomas and Allen, 1984).

A population of two to three dozen plants of Medeola was found in flower on a sandy hill near Pushepatapa Creek in Sec. 38, T1S, R12E, Washington Parish, Louisiana, in May, 1985. Washington Parish has been previously surveyed (Taylor and Thomas, 1985) and its unique plants reported (Thomas and Taylor, 1986). Medeola was discovered during a spring 1985, survey of approximately 37 acres along Pushepatapa Creek. This survey was undertaken because of the relatively undisturbed nature of the tract. Conversations with local residents indicate the area has not been logged since the early 1900's. The habitat is hilly, mesic hardwood forest located within Louisiana's longleaf pine vegetation zone.

The Pushepatapa Creek watershed is well known to Louisiana botanists to contain a number of plants unusual to the area. It is, for example, the only known Louisiana location for Quercus laevis Walt. (turkey oak) and Thelypteris noveboracensis (L.) Nieuwl. (New York fern) (Thomas, personal communication). This habitat is ecologically significant and is probably the western limit of Medeola's geographic distribution as well as for other species.

The Nature Conservancy's Louisiana Natural Heritage Program has assigned Medeola to its rarest plant status (S1) for the state (Parker, 1986). Voucher specimens are deposited in the herbaria of Northeast Louisiana University, Monroe, and Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond.

LITERATURE CITED

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